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Message Text

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PAGE 01 DHAHRA 00630 130832Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 /020 W
----------093627 140213Z /65
R 130735Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6246
USDOC WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
USLO RIYADH

UNCLAS DHAHRAN 0630

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECON, ETRD, BEXP, SA
SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT

1. CONSOFFS MET WITH EASTERN PROVINCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT SA'AD AL-MAOJIL TO DISCUSS HIS RECENT TRIP TO U.S. AS MEMBER OF ARAB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DLEGATION. AL-MOAJIL WAS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE VISIT AND MOST PLEASED WITH RECEPTION GROUP ENCOUNTERED DURING THEIR 5-CITY TOUR.

2. ACCORDING TO AL-MIAJIL, "BEST ATMOSPHERE" FOR ARAB DELEGATION WAS FOUND IN HOUSTON AND "MOST HOSTILE" REACTION IN NEW YORK. HE SEEMED PLEASED THAT TOP USG OFFICIALS WERE ABLE TO SPEND TIME WITH GROUP IN WASHINGTON, BUT HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT GROUP DID NOT MEET MORE CONGRESSMEN WHO WERE NOT SYMPATHETIC TO ARAB CAUSE. THE FEW CONGRESSMEN THEY DID MEET, AL-MOAJIL SAID, WERE ALREADY CONVINCED OF NEED FOR GREATER US/ARAB FRIENDSHIP.

3. AL-MOAJIL CLAIMED THAT HE WAS ASTOUNDED AT BIAS OF AMERICAN NEWS MEDIA IN FAVOR OF ISRAEL. HE CONTENDED THAT AMERICAN TV AND NEWPAPERS WERE CONSTANTLY TOUTING VIRTURES OF ISRAEL TO DETRIMENT OF ARABS. (AL-MOAJIL SPEAKS LITTLE ENGLISH AND UNDERSTANDS A BIT MORE SO HIS IMPRESSIONS OF U.S. MEDIA MAY HAVE FILTERED THROUGH SOME OTHER ENGLISH-
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SPEAKING MEMBER OF GROUP).

4. WHILE IN U.S. AL-MOAJIL SAID THAT HE HAD DISCOVERED A NUMBER OF NEW PRODUCT LINES OF WHICH HE HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN UNAWARE AND WHICH HE MIGHT ADD TO HIS TRADING LINE. HE STATED FLATLY, "U.S. IS ONLY COUNTRY IN WHICH TO DO BUSINESS NOW BECAUSE AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN ARE MOST DIRECT AND STRAIGHTFORWARD

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IN THE WORLD.
5. USING THIS LATTER STATEMENT AS HOOK ON WHICH TO
HANG DISCUSSION
OF POSSIBLE SAUDI BYING/INVESTMENT MISSION TO U.S., CONSOFF ASKED
MOAJIL FOR HIS VIEWS ON SUCH A MISSION. MOAJIL THOUGHT IDEAS WAS
EXCELLENT ONE SINCE IT WOULD AFFORD OTHER SAUDI BUSINESSMEN
OPPORTUNITY TO SEE SCOPE OF U.S. EXPORT POTENTIAL AND NEW
PRODUCT LINES.

6. CONSOFFS MENTIONED PROPOSAL AIRED EARLY LAST YEAR WITH
CHAMBER INVOLVING ONE OR MORE STATE DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES ARRANGING
PROGRAM FOR SAUDI MISSION (SEE DHAHRAN 0604). AL-MOAJIL
WELCOMED THIS APPROACH AND SAID CHAMBER COULD APPROACH ITS MEMBERS
ON BASIS OF INDIVIDUAL STATE'S CAPABILITY AND RESOURCES.
THUS, IF CHAMBER HAD INFORMATION REGARDING GOODS PRODUCED
IN PARTICULAR STATE, CHAMBER COULD APPROACH HETEROGENEIOUS
GROUP OF SAUDI BUSINESSMEN TO FORM MISSION TO VISIT
THAT STATE AND/OR ANOTHER STATE WHICH PRODUCES GOODS OF
INTEREST TO SAUDIS AND WHICH HAS SHOWN INTEREST IN PROGRAMMING
SAUDI VISIT.

7. CONSOFFS PROMISED TO PURSUE MATTER FURTHER AND TO RETURN
TO AL-MOAJIL WITH MORE DETAILS OF PROPOSED SAUDI BUYING/
INVESTMENT MISSION TO U.S.

8. AL-MOAJIL, WHO HAS BEEN MOST COOPERATIVE IN PAST WITH REGARD
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TO ASSISTANCE FOR U.S. TRADE MISSIONS TO EASTERN PROVINCE, WILL
PROBABLY BE EVEN MORE GENEROUS IN HIS SUPPORT FOR FUTURE MISSIONS
BECAUSE OF HIS RECENT HAPPY EXPERIENCES IN THE STATES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETINGS, EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, TRADE VISITS, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DHAHRA00630
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780204-0413
Format: TEL
From: DHAHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780561/aaaabzuh.tel
Line Count: 98
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e71b969f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2699433
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISCUSSION WITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT
TAGS: ECON, ETRD, BEXP, SA, (AL-MAOJIL, SA\'AD)
To: STATE COM
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e71b969f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014